LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE & FISHERIES
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Waterfowl Population Estimates
in Louisiana's Coastal Zone Below
U.S. Highway 90 and on Catahoula Lake.

Date: Coastal Zone, September 13-14, & 17, 2004
Catahoula Lake September 10, 2004

Reported By: S. Durham, M. Perot, D. Hayden

September 20, 2004

Pilot: B. Dorsa

Estimates made from Aircraft (*) Estimate less than 1,000

SPECIES	SOUTHWEST	SOUTHEAST	CATAHOULA LAKE	TOTALS
MALLARD	*			0
MOTTLED	38,000	29,000		67,000
GADWALL	*			0
WIGEON				0
GW TEAL	*	*		0
BW TEAL	251,000	41,000	6,000	298,000
SHOVELER	2,000		*	2,000
PINTAIL	8,000		1,000	9,000
TOTAL DABBLERS	**299,000**	**70,000**	**7,000**	**376,000**
SCAUP				0
RINGNECKED	2,000		*	2,000
CANVASBACK				0
TOTAL DIVERS	**2,000**	**0**	*	**2,000**
TOTAL DUCKS	**301,000**	**70,000**	**7,000**	**378,000**
COOTS				0

COMMENTS:

Due to Hurricane Ivan, the survey was disrupted and estimates were not available prior to the season opener. The estimate of 298,000 blue-winged teal is similar to last year (313,000) and to the 20-year average (245,000). Most teal were observed in southwest Louisiana marshes.

Marsh conditions in southwest Louisiana appeared very good, with abundant submerged aquatic vegetation (SAVs) and shallow water, which are especially attractive to teal. Good teal numbers were observed west of Calcasieu Lake, south of Grand Lake, and north and east of White Lake.

Conditions at the Atchafalaya Delta appeared good with moderate to good waterfowl food availability. However, large numbers of teal were not observed in the area.

The southwest Louisiana agricultural region is dry except were there is managed water. Few teal were observed in the rice on this survey.

At Pass a Loutre WMA, near the mouth of the Mississippi River, water levels were already very high on Tuesday, shortly before the storm, and high winds were causing considerable white capping and muddy water. Mottled ducks and teal were hunkered down in the grass, not flushing, and difficult to observe. Survey results may be somewhat biased due to the low observations of teal in the southeast region due to the winds and approaching hurricane. It is expected that Ivan will have caused considerable damage to vegetation and waterfowl foods in extreme southeast marshes.